

Salem Lamartine 11:00 7/28/68

Processional Hymn 223
*Call to Worship Page 196
*Confession of Sin
*Assurance of Pardon
Scripture Psalm 91
*Gloria Patri
*Apostles Creed
*Pastoral Prayer
Anthem
Announcements

FELL FELL. 6.30

Offering, Response, Prayer
Hymn 265
Sermon
Prayer & Lord's Prayer
*Hymn 275
*Benediction
*Threefold Amen
*Postlude

St. John Emerton 9:30 7/28/68

Processional Hymn 12
*Call to Worship Page 196
*Confession of Sin
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Responsive Reading Page 597 Sel. 49
Hymn 14
Scripture Psalm 91
*Gloria Patri
*Apostles Creed
*Pastoral Prayer & Response
Anthem
Announcements

Offering & Prayer
*Hymn 192
Sermon
Prayer & Lord's Prayer
*Hymn 271
*Benediction
*Threefold Amen
Postlude

TRINITY CHARGE --THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Ralph C. Link, Pastor
Trinity Church, New Bloomfield 9:00 A.M.

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP June 25, 1972

The Organ Prelude

*The Hymn of Praise 63

*The Call to Worship

*The Prayer of Confession (Unison)

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, whose power is our protection, whose wisdom is our guidance, whose love is our redemption, grant us Thy Holy Spirit that we may perfectly love you, and following faithfully in the way of your will, find in you our salvation. We come confessing our sins, our repeated failures, our unfulfilled vows. We have forgotten you: we have tried to do without you; and we have failed. Forgive us and bring us, by your grace, into fellowship with your perfect holiness; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

*The Kyrie

*The Assurance of Pardon

The Scripture --- Psalm 91

*The Gloria Patri

The Pastoral Prayer

The Announcements

The Receiving of Tithes and Offerings

*The Doxology

*The Offering Prayer and Lord's Prayer

The Hymn of Meditation 254

The Sermon --- "Dwelling, Abiding

and Shadows"

The Sermon Prayer

*The Hymn of Response 282

*The Benediction

*The Threefold Amen

*The Postlude

Call to Worship: Come, and let us walk in the light of the Lord. He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in His paths.

Call to Confession: Seek the Lord, while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. Let us seek His forgiveness in prayer.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Assurance of Pardon: The Lord redeems the life of His people. For ~~xxx~~high as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His steadfast love toward those who fear Him. None of those who seek His forgiveness will He cast out.

Text: Psalm 91; He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty..

During world war II a regiment of British troops under the command of a very religious and devout man, was making preparations to go into battle. Before they departed at zero hour this regimental commander asked the men to bow their heads and ~~repeat the 91st Psalm in prayer.~~ ^{PRAY TOGETHER IN UNISON} After this they moved out and encountered the enemy in battle. When the battle was over it was discovered that not one man in the regiment had been killed. Not one single one. ^{THE PRAYER} ~~This is simply~~ ^{THEY PRAYED WAS THE 91ST PSALM. REPEAT} ~~a true illustration of complete faith.~~ ^{REPEAT TEXT}

The words of this Psalm may be rather strange sounding to us in this modern day and age. It starts with a sentence that seems rather impossible. He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Strange talk indeed. Where is the secret place of the most High? And how can we possibly dwell there? The Psalmist must have had in mind the same thing that we say and think today. God dwells in us, and if we abide in Him, He in turn abides in us and therefore we dwell in the secret place of the most High.

There is much meat and much substance to this Psalm. It gives us much to console us when we are running a little low in our faith. The wording of it is so beautiful. He shall cover thee with His feathers and under His wings shalt thou trust. This is a rather visible illustration to most of us and we can almost visualize God as stretching out His wings to enfold us as a mother hen does to protect her brood. For He shall give His angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. Another picturesque phrase. The beauty of this Psalm is tremendous. Yet in its 16 short verses it gives us the qualities of God. What God can do for us if we believe. And it tells how we can live our lives with confidence by having faith in God, and in turn this Faith will help to keep us from some of the pitfalls of life.

The Psalmist expressed his faith in God in the only way he knew how. By the use of illustrations that were pertinent to him and mankind in his

day and age. But the Psalm is more than just pretty words and picturesque statements. It is telling truths that apply to us as well as those people who first heard it and read it.

The three basic words of the first verse are dwelleth, abide and shadow. Each of them is saying something complete. Not a half statement but a complete statement. Dwelleth is a rather strange word to us. But quite simply it is the word we know as dwell dressed up in old English style. According to Webster dwell means to abide, and here we are using one of our other words, to abide as a permanent resident. So this leads us to think that here the Psalmist was talking about a permanent relationship between us and God, and not just a temporary one. We all know what it is to be permanent residents. We are all permanent residents of a certain house in a certain place. We don't live here today and in the house across the street tomorrow and another ^{house} ~~one~~ the next day. This is exaggerated to be sure, but it is used merely to prove the use of the word dwell. Now if we dwell or are permanent residents in the secret place of God, then God is as the Psalmist said. We have the complete faith that He will be with us in all things. But we must remain faithful to Him and dwell with Him. This is the only stipulation that we are given. He that dwelleth. Then follows what belief and faith in God will do for us in our lives.

~~Then we have~~ The word abide, ~~and it also~~ also means to dwell, but one of its other meanings is to remain steadfast or faithful, and to continue in a certain condition. In this instance it would be to continue in the condition of faith. Not ~~to~~ ^{For} just ~~have~~ faith to see us through a certain crisis, But to have faith in all things. In every circumstance of life. In everything that comes our way. This is the faith the Psalmist is talking about. An abiding faith, a continuing faith. A faith that is complete and full, a faith that is there no matter what.

Then if we look at the word abide rather closely we can detect that it has a familiar ring about it. The familiarity comes from the Gospel of John. Jesus used the word abide 9 times in the first 10 verses of the 15th chapter.

He tells us, "Abide in me and I in you." And, "He who abides in me and I in him, he it is who bears much fruit." Now here we get the full impact of the word abide. remain steadfast and faithful. Jesus is pointing up the fact that if we remain steadfast and faithful we will bear much fruit. And ^{THE} isn't this truth? Can we do anything for the kingdom if we are slip shod about it? Can we be about our Father's business if we are fired up one day and indifferent the next? Of course we can't. We must have the work of God imprinted on our lives as well as our hearts. We need to be continually aware that we are to be living and doing the work of God however and whenever we can. This is the true meaning of the word abide. It is more than a living under God's shadow. It is doing and being. Remaining steadfast and faithful each day of our lives.

Then we have the word shadow. We all know what a shadow is. The word as it is used in this and other Psalms, and elsewhere in the Bible for that matter, is used in the archaic, outdated meaning. The meaning was to shelter or to protect. This meaning may seem strange to us, but to the Hebrews God was a much larger God, He was more powerful, more to be feared and much greater than anything else. We perhaps do not think of God as being quite as large, and quite as all powerful as the Hebrews did. Possibly we are taking God too much for granted because of this. The love and obedience toward God was very great by these people. All we need to do is look at our own country and we can see how deeply we love God. We have trouble not only filling our churches but in filling the pulpits of ^{SOME} these churches. Why? Mainly because the God we worship and love is such a loving God that He is going to forgive us no matter what we do. We have no need to live the Godly life, the so called good life. But the Christian life, the Godly life is something that must be lived as close to God as we can get. In this respect I think our Hebrew friends had the right idea. They were as true to their God as they could be, when they were following Him. But their trouble was that they made Him a God of rules and regulations after a while, and this was perhaps as bad if not worse than the God people make of Him today. But getting back to the shadow, we find that this God was so vast, so large that His shadow was protection

enough. The Hebrew people only needed the shadow of God to fall on them and this was their security. This is faith that is great. This is the kind of faith that each of us should possess. We can if we accept God and His promises.

The first verse of this Psalm would read as follows if we substituted the other words for dwells, abides and shadow.

He that is a permanent resident in the secret place of the most High, shall remain steadfast and faithful under the shelter and protection of the Almighty. Now perhaps this isn't as poetic as the Psalm itself, but nevertheless it makes the meaning as clear as it is possible to do. It shows us that we need to put all our faith and all our trust in God and He will take care of us.

Most of our illustrations of faith always seem to come from experiences of war or fighting. Perhaps this is because God never seems closer than ~~he does~~ when one is under fire. I am sure that many of our men here this morning can agree with this and I ^{TOO HAVE} ~~also~~ ^{CLOSELY} felt this way. There are not too many examples that are given by civilians, either, because of a reluctance to talk about it or a desire to remain anonymous. But I am sure that each one of us here, has at one time or another had an experience that showed us what faith is and what it can do. According to a story written about General Dwight Eisenhower, ^{AFTER} ~~when~~ he had watched the armada of ships and planes leave for France to start D* Day, he saluted them and then prayed. Afterward he explained to a reporter, ^{QUOTE} "There comes a time when you have done all that you can possibly do, when you have used your brains, your training, and your technical skill, when the die is cast, and events are in the hands of God- and there you have to leave them." Unquote. This is a good example of faith. Leave things in the hands of God. This is what the Psalmist was trying to say and perhaps his message was lost on his hearers, as most of our messages fall on deaf ears in our world today ~~also~~. But we need to listen and we need to hear the words of faith. The tensions of this life and ^{THE TURMOIL} all around us, makes it imperative that we have something to hang on to. Someone to care about us. This something is faith and the someone is God. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." This ^{IS} ~~the~~ message

TODAY

for ~~1968~~. This is the message for all time. Let us accept this truth and this message, and let us begin to use this faith in our lives if we haven't done so before. Perhaps we have somehow or other gotten off the track and lost our way and some of our faith. But we can get back in the groove if we seek God. When the struggles of life overtake us, and the burden of life itself seems to hang like a weight around us, let us take to the Scripture, and search until we find this beautiful Psalm 91. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in Him will I trust." Let us pray.

Shirley & Ralph Charles Link, Nancy Link, Dale with Lianne his wife, Lloyd Link with Karen his wife
Jessica in front of Ralph C. Link
Ethan and Alisha in front of R. Dale and Lianne Link (the eldest son & family)









Ralph C. Link
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Born: April 9, 1929, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Married: December 15, 1951
Wife: Shirley Margaret Neill
Born: December 8, 1930, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Children: Ralph Dale Link, born May 11, 1955, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Lloyd Alan Link, born May 28, 1958, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Nancy Lynn Link, born March 15, 1961, Butler, Pa.

SCHOOLING:

Graduated from Perry High School, Pittsburgh, Pa.
June 1947

Lay Ministry School, Penn West Conference of United
Church of Christ, September 1965 to May 1969

Commissioned Lay Minister June 1969

Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pa.,
September 1970

Graduated from Lancaster Theological Seminary May 1974

Ordained to Christian Ministry March 10, 1974

PASTORATES:

As Lay Minister: short term, 1 month or less in
various churches 1965 to 1967

Emlenton Lamartine Charge of United Church of Christ
1967 to 1969

Short term in various churches 1970 until Seminary
entrance July 1970

July 1970 to December 1973 Student Pastor at Trinity
Charge, New Bloomfield, Duncannon, Pa., Penn Central
Conference, United Church of Christ

December 1973 to present, St. Paul's United Church of
Christ, Butler, Pa., Penn West Conference, United
Church of Christ

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

OF

Ralph C. Link

I am the youngest of five children. I was born just prior to the onset of the Depression. Our family was very poor. My father was an alcoholic and my mother was a very religious person who was searching for the Lord. During my childhood she did her best to teach me the things of the Lord. Later in life she came to a personal relationship with Him.

I grew up in the Evangelical and Reformed Church where salvation by grace alone was not preached nor taught. I knew all about Jesus, what He did, how He lived, His miracles, His death and resurrection, but I didn't know Him personally.

My life had many ups and downs and all the while I was attending church and striving with my good works to please God. At a very low point in my life when we were deeply in debt and my wife and three children were all ill, I came to the crossroads. I watched a Billy Graham Crusade on television from some distant city and the message he preached seemed to be directed right at me. I wrestled with making that commitment to Christ, but didn't. The next afternoon and evening at work on the 4 to 12 shift I came to the conclusion that I needed to make that commitment to Christ. It seemed like there was no other choice if life was to have any meaning. That night when I came home from work at 1:00 A.M., I laid face down on the living room floor and told God that I couldn't live my life in my own strength and I accepted the gift of salvation from my Savior Jesus Christ. My life has never been the same.

Through several meaningful circumstances I was called by God to serve Him in the Christian Ministry and to help spread that wonderful message of salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. What a wonderful and rewarding time it has been and I give Him all the praise for my salvation and the opportunity to serve Him.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

OF

Ralph C. Link

I believe the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired inerrant Word of God. I believe the Bible is the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men and it is the final authority for the Christian faith and life.

I believe in one God, who is eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I believe in the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ that He is true God and true man. I believe that He was born of the Virgin Mary, that He lived in sinless life, that He performed the miracles recorded in Scripture, that He died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, that He bodily arose from the dead, that He ascended on high where He is at the right hand of Almighty God as our intercessor.

I believe in the Holy Spirit and that He comes and indwells each believer at the time of conversion. I believe that He lives in each believer to lead, to instruct, and to convict so that a believer may live a more godly life.

I believe that through the shed blood of Jesus Christ and through His resurrection, this is the only ground for justification and salvation for all who receive Him. A Lord and Savior and to such as receive Him, they are born of the Holy Spirit and become children of God.

I believe water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of the Church but are not means of salvation.

I believe in the personal and premillennial and imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe in the resurrection of the dead, for the believer to resurrection of life and joy with the Lord, for the unbeliever to resurrection of judgement and everlasting punishment.